

West Parry Sound Health Centre promotes the need for public to avoid all risk

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Risk avoidance is a social responsibility that must be increased during our community's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

That message is being strongly shared by West Parry Sound Health Centre and other emergency service providers.

"Under the current precautions imposed by federal and provincial authorities, standing together in public less than six feet apart, gathering with people not normally part of your household, or even leaving your own home for local travel, should all be viewed as risk-taking behaviour," said West Parry Sound Health Centre Chief of Staff Dr. Terence Fargher.

"People must be made to understand the additional, and potentially extreme, risks that are now associated with boating, cottaging, camping, or traveling any further than your local grocery store."

All of the community safety systems that we usually rely on are equally exposed to the dangers of COVID-19: leaving them vulnerable to potential depletion of staff resources, constrained access to personal protective equipment (PPE), competing demands, and the requirement for expanded public safety priorities.

"What we normally assume to be an enjoyable recreational experience could become deadly, and accessing the services of local emergency responders will deplete scarce resources that are already in very short supply."

We are encouraging everyone in our community:

- Do not travel any distance outside of your local pharmacy, grocery store, or health care service provider. In particular, please avoid outdoor risks like boating, camping, cottaging, and other high-risk behaviours. A reminder that all outdoor fires are banned everywhere in Ontario.
- Everyone out in public in locations where social distancing cannot be maintained should be wearing a non-medical mask or material (bandanna, scarf) that covers your nose and mouth.
- If you have been provided with a mask by your employer, or received a community made mask, please ensure that you are wearing it properly, covering your nose and mouth.
- Practice all appropriate precautions to avoid the spread of COVID-19, including frequent hand washing (use of hand sanitizer) with soap and water, maintain physical distancing, and do not gather with people not normally part of your household.

"We have a large population of vulnerable people in West Parry Sound, especially the elderly, who can be exposed to COVID-19 with serious or even fatal consequences," said WPSHC CEO Donald Sanderson. "We must all share in taking action to protect each other."

West Parry Sound Health Centre Communications Officer

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